

EXHIBIT 7

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves North Carolina Disaster Declaration

Today, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that a major disaster exists in the State of North Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by Tropical Storm Helene beginning on September 25, 2024, and continuing.

The President's action makes Federal funding available to affected individuals in Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey Counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

Federal funding also is available to State, tribal, and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work in Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey Counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Finally, Federal funding is available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

Mr. Thomas J. McCool of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been appointed to coordinate Federal recovery operations in the affected areas.

Damage assessments are continuing in other areas, and more counties and additional forms of assistance may be designated after the assessments are fully completed.

Residents and business owners who sustained losses in the designated areas can begin applying for assistance at www.DisasterAssistance.gov, or by calling 800-621-FEMA (3362), or by using the [FEMA App](#). Anyone using a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, can give FEMA the number for that service.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION MEDIA SHOULD CONTACT THE FEMA NEWS DESK AT (202) 646-3272 OR FEMA-NEWS-DESK@FEMA.DHS.GOV.

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